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REFERENCE: GS 123

ATTACHMENT TO M-6214  
4 APRIL 1969  
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PROBABLE RAILWAY REALIGNMENT  
HANOI-PING HSIANG RAILLINE,  
NORTH VIETNAM  
2142N 10640E

1. SIGNIFICANCE:

THIS BRIEFING BOARD DEPICTS PROBABLE MAJOR RAILWAY REALIGNMENT NEAR THE NORTH VIETNAM-CHINA BORDER.

2. LOCATION:

10 NM SOUTH OF LANG SON, NORTH VIETNAM.

3. BACKGROUND:

THE HANOI-PINGHSIANG RAIL LINE IS THE MAIN RAIL ROUTE BETWEEN NORTH VIETNAM AND CHINA. IT PROVIDES A DIRECT TRANSPORT LINK TO NANNING AND OTHER LARGE INDUSTRIAL CENTERS OF EASTERN CHINA. THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS LINE TO THE NORTH VIETNAMESE IS EVIDENCED BY THE FACT THAT IT WAS GIVEN TOP PRIORITY IN RESTORATION PROGRAMS AFTER THEIR WAR WITH THE FRENCH AND DURING U.S. AIRSTRIKES AGAINST THE NORTH VIETNAMESE RAIL LINES.

THE SECTION WHERE THIS CONSTRUCTION IS OBSERVED IS LOCATED IN RUGGED TERRAIN. THE LINE TRAVERSES HILLS WITH GRADES UP TO 2.4%, AND HAS NUMEROUS SHARP CURVES, MAKING PASSAGE AS DIFFICULT AS ANYWHERE IN NORTH VIETNAM.

THIS NEW ACTIVITY WAS FIRST REPORTED AS UNIDENTIFIED CONSTRUCTION ON PHOTOGRAPHY OF [REDACTED]

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4. MISSION READOUT:

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PHOTOGRAPHY OF 20 MARCH 1969 REVEALS PROBABLE MAJOR REALIGNMENT OF THE HANOI-PINGHSIANG RAIL LINE IN THE VICINITY OF LANG SON. THE CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY AT PRESENT IN AN EARLY STAGE, IS OBSERVED OVER A DISTANCE OF 5.5 NM BETWEEN 21-41-20N 106-38-00E AND 21-45-00N 106-42-40E. IT INCLUDES EARTH CLEARING AND LEVELING, DISMANTLING OF BUILDINGS, AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF CULVERTS ALONG THE LENGTH OF CONSTRUCTION.

THE MOST ACTIVE AREA OF CONSTRUCTION IS LOCATED AT 21-42-32N 106-40-05E WHERE THE RIGHT OF WAY CROSSES ROUTE 1A. THIS RIGHT OF WAY FOLLOWS A SURVEY LINE OVER HIGH, UNEVEN TOPOGRAPHY. UNUSUALLY LONG CONCRETE CULVERTS, UP TO 200 FEET LONG, ARE BEING USED TO PROVIDE DRAINAGE.

5. REMARKS:

THE JUNCTURES OF THIS ACTIVITY WITH THE EXISTING RAIL LINE CANNOT YET BE DETERMINED FROM PHOTOGRAPHY. ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY LINE ON A CONTOUR MAP, HOWEVER, INDICATES THE MOST PROBABLE LOCATIONS OF THE JUNCTURES ARE AS DEPICTED ON THE GRAPHIC. THE LONG CULVERTS COMBINED WITH THE TERRAIN TRAVERSED BY THE SURVEY LINE INDICATES THE LARGE AMOUNT OF EARTH MOVING THE CONSTRUCTION CREWS MUST ACCOMPLISH TO STRAIGHTEN AND LEVEL THIS SECTION OF RAIL LINE. THIS REALIGNMENT WILL GREATLY FACILITATE RAIL MOVEMENT THROUGH THIS PARTICULARLY RUGGED TERRAIN BY ELIMINATING MANY SHARP CURVES AND DECREASING THE GRADE.

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MAP REF: AMS SERIES 1501 SHEET JOB NF 48-12

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